

Not Beating the Odds - Thrashing them...!

by Lynleigh Greig (new recruit)

Anita Kookaburra was named after a Singaporean lady, Anita Moorjani, who has been famously documented for having a "Near Death Experience" just what Anita had!

On the eve of the January 22nd, she swooped in front of a car travelling at 80km/hr and

became entangled in the front grill and continued in this manner for at least 10km! The driver and passengers were unaware that she was still there until they'd parked their car and gone inside to make dinner. It was only then that they heard her plaintive cries and were horrified to see her still flapping around in the grill trying to break free. By the time I came on the scene, blood was pouring from her beak and eye and I suspected

internal injuries. I

how she was still

mashed into the

well over an hour

grill and it took

for me and the

driver of the car

to extricate her.

Once she was

finally out, she

alive! She was

have no idea

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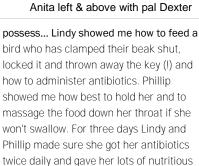


her new surroundings!

I rushed her straight to the local afterhours vet. They looked at her injuries, shaking their heads and I knew what they were thinking... However, they put her under anaesthetic, sutured her punctured throat and gave her some fluids. When I took her home I gave my kids 'the talk' about life and death and we fully expected to wake to the sound of two sobbing kids. Our feisty little Anita, however, was perched in the basket waiting for us!

sitting up and looking curiously around at

Knowing how special she was, I took her directly to Lindy and Phillip who have the wonderful healing touch that I don't yet



food, love and care!

However Thursday was Anita's big moment as Lindy had booked her in to see "The Magic Man" - Dr Howard Ralph. Having been told that Howard can work miracles on the sickest of animals, I was thrilled that Anita had an opportunity to be seen by this extraordinary vet. As Lindy had promised, he worked his magic and she was soon managing to eat unaided and was buddied up with another (tall, dark and handsome) kookaburra...! At the moment she and her new buddy, Dexter, are living in their new apartment (Sue's aviary) and getting along famously.

Anita is the only bird I know with 'tiger blood' flowing through her feisty little veins.



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Coordinator's Corner

This edition of Coordinator's Corner features Margaret Wells. Until recently Margaret was the busy Northern Districts Coordinator for insectivorous birds, carnivorous birds, raptors and fund raising. In addition she has held the position of Raptor Course Coordinator. Whilst she has recently handed over a couple of her roles

she remains an active and busy

coordinator.

"I am one of the people who joined Sydney Wildlife right back at the time it was founded about 14 years ago. Prior to that I'd been a member of WIRES for a number of years. I joined WIRES because my daughter Karen wanted to do their course. I had to drive her there and back so I thought I might as well do the course. That was 25 years ago and I've never stopped learning about wildlife since.

I was a double certificated nursing sister and so I had some understanding about

pain and broken bones which in turn has helped me understand what the animals are going through. When I was with WIRES I looked after possums, birds and even a bat but when I came across to Sydney Wildlife I started to focus on caring for birds as my son-in-law built me three beautiful aviaries.

After a while I took over the roles of Insectivorous and Carnivorous Bird Coordinator from Jacqui Corr. At that time there wasn't a Raptor Coordinator role. Midge and I went to a raptor course in Junee and it was after that, that I was appointed as raptor Coordinator for the Northern Districts and co-ordinator for the Raptor Training course.

I have also always been involved in fundraising and community education and I can well remember in the early years of Sydney Wildlife baking cakes and running cake stalls with Mary Laws, Barb Tyas, Philippa Hoffmann and many more. I've



enjoyed all of my coordinator roles because I really enjoy educating people, whether they be members of the public or members of Sydney Wildlife. I especially enjoy educating people about birds and try to encourage new members to think like a bird. I hope that will help people think about what birds need when they are in our care, what they eat and how they behave. My biggest thrill was caring for baby Powerful Owls and returning them to their parents inside of four days."

Warm and Fuzzy by Dianne Jenner

Last December, my Christmas shopping was interrupted by a call from the office. A young couple clearing leaves from behind the air conditioner on their third floor balcony had disturbed a mother ringtail with a baby on her back. The mother had immediately bolted, but the baby fell off her back, and was clinging to the balcony wall, so I headed to the apartment.

The members of the public (MOPs), newcomers to Australia and not familiar with our possums, had managed to put the little one into a box. He weighed 120g and was very stressed, so I took him back to my home nearby. On a whim, I then got the office to contact the MOPs and give them my phone number in case the mother

returned. I thought it was worth a try, but wasn't overly optimistic.

At 10pm I was surprised to get a phone call from the MOPs, saying the mother possum had returned to the balcony, and was pacing back and forth and chirping for her baby. I grabbed him, and raced back.

As soon as I entered the apartment, the chirping from mother on the balcony intensified, and the baby immediately responded from inside his rescue basket. I put him on a table on the balcony, and tried to retreat into the apartment so as not to scare the mother away, but she was a possum on a mission. She raced past me to her baby, sniffed it a couple of times,

and stuck her nose under its belly, pushing it up on to her back. We all gasped as she then leapt on to the balcony railing, with her baby hanging on precariously, then jumped across to an overhanging branch and disappeared into the depths of a large tree. It all took about five minutes, but it was the best five minutes of my weekend (yes, I know, I know, get a life!).

I'm sure other SMWS members have done much the same thing, but it was a first for me, and it did give me the "warm and fuzzies". Thank goodness for a couple of MOPs who were sensible and caring, and went to a bit of extra trouble. Those possums don't know how lucky they were.



Chris Balmond from Inner West branch says, "A lady rang about a bird that her husband had seen at the side of the road at Castle Hill and when I asked her if she knew what kind of bird it was she said "I think it was a gazelle - one of those pink and grey birds"!"

Whose calling?

Ever looked at your mobile, not recognised the number calling you and later found that you had missed out on a rescue? Our phone system diverts outgoing calls to mobiles through two mobile numbers (this helps a little with keeping our phone bills down). Please enter these numbers into your mobile phone so that you recognise them and know when the rescue office is trying to reach you. The numbers are: 0437 094 130 & 0438 194 137.

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2011 Sydney Wildlife Awards

Forget about the Oscars and the Grammys! The November AGM saw significant awards bestowed on two of our members. Mary Laws received a lifetime membership award and Garry Marsh received the Liane Poulton Award.

Lifetime Membership was bestowed on Mary Laws from the Northern Districts branch. Mary was a founding member of Sydney Wildlife and has consistently demonstrated commitment to almost every aspect of our work since the inception of our organisation. This has included animal rescue and care, positions on various committees, board membership and even a period as the Chair of Sydney Wildlife. Mary has taken an active role in her branch including attendance at branch meetings, taking on branch executive and coordinator roles, assisting with information stalls and displays and a period as Chair of the ND branch.

Having worked in the office on a weekly basis for 14 years Mary has seen (and been a party to) many changes. As well as keeping us updated with current membership lists, since the formation of Sydney Wildlife Mary has continually and painstakingly, maintained and updated the master-list of every person who has ever been a member of Sydney Wildlife. With its constant changes and amendments, it is a huge and unenviable responsibility.

The Liane Poulton Award:

Liane Poulton was one of the founding directors of Sydney Wildlife and a particularly committed and dedicated

member of our organisation. Just three years after SMWS was founded and when Liane was only in her early 50s, she sadly and unexpectedly died. The Liane Poulton Award was established in her memory.

The Award is offered each year at our Annual General Meeting. Recipients of the Award are members of Sydney Wildlife who have shown commitment and dedication above and beyond the call of duty. The 2011 Liane Poulton Award recipient Garry Marsh certainly met the criteria.

Garry joined Sydney Wildlife in May 2001 and from outset fully engrossed himself in the organisation. An active rescuer and carer, Garry is also known for his friendly manner and support of other members. Not only does he fill a half day shift in the office every week but also takes on after hours shifts and fills in from time-to-time when shifts can't be filled or other members pull out of their shifts at short notice

Travelling all over Sydney to set up, staff and dismantle displays; spending endless hours doing data input (a testimony to how important is the data entered on call sheets), Garry has always willingly gone above and beyond the call of duty.

Active at a branch level, Garry regularly attends branch meetings and has filled a number of roles on the ND branch executive. In addition to being a fund raiser extraordinaire, Garry also served for many years on the Training Committee, was a presenter at the Rescue and Care Course (that's what used to be called the



Above: Chair Jann Jeffries & Mary Laws



Above: Chair Jann Jeffries & Garry Marsh

BTC) and is currently both Coordinator of and presenter at, the Macropod Course.

Exit surveys

With any volunteer organisation it is natural that members come and go as their situations change. The Board of SMWS is keen to learn why our members leave and what we can do to improve the experience of being a Sydney Wildlife volunteer.

To understand why our members leave, we need to know as much about why they left as we can. For example, why they joined SMWS in the first place; whether or not we lived up to their expectations; what contributed to their decision to leave and

whether there is any correlation between how involved members become in the organisation and the likelihood of their leaving. It is also important to know how members may represent Sydney Wildlife after they leave and whether they have any insights into what we could do better.

To help gather as much information as possible, a comprehensive Exit Survey has been developed which all exiting members will be asked to complete. The form will also be sent to members who left over the

last 12 months. Sometimes members don't resign, they simply don't renew their membership. These members will also be given the opportunity to complete the survey. Whilst the survey covers all of the aspects outlined above, it only comprises one double sided sheet which can be down loaded from the on-line resources page of the Members Only section of our website. If you know anyone who has left Sydney Wildlife, please encourage them to take a few minutes to complete the survey.

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Alert - Flying-fox Carers - New Milk Formula Just for Bats

This article compiled by Sonja Elwood with information also provided by Mandi Griffiths and Dave Pinson is an abridged version with the full article available from Sydney Wildlife's website.

An exciting new milk formula has been released and is specifically designed for Flying-foxes and Microbats and a study is taking place comparing the development of pups raised on the formula with the development of mother raised pups. More about that later.

The product, BIOLAC Baby Bat Milk Formula is specifically manufactured fresh in small batches and is currently available via Mandi Griffith (and shortly via the office and your Flying-fox co-ordinators). This product is not to be confused with BIOLAC Puppy – a different product – perfect for puppies, not bat 'pups'.

Advantages of the new product are outlined in the full paper available from our website.

One minor drawback to the new product is the fact that carers must offer water between feeds (particularly on hot days) as this milk is a real 'food' not a drink. Without water offerings pups may become constipated and in extreme cases are at risk of prolapse. I am sure many carers will be used to offering water as this is also the case when using Wombaroo.

As part of the study and to assist in the evaluation process, digital radiographs of both Biolac-raised pups and mother-reared pups will be taken at 10 weeks old via Currumbin Wildlife Hospital.

Some thoughts and trends regarding natural Flying-fox milk and artificial replacements available:

In Australia, after many years of rearing Flying-fox pups, wildlife carers still have little or no real research or science to refer to for guidance as to what constitutes the best replacement milk. We do know the composition of natural Flying-fox milk. In this regard, there are two known papers we can refer to:

1. Messer, M., Parry-Jones, K (1997). *Milk Composition in the Grey-headed Flying-fox, Pteropus poliocephalus (Pteropodidae: Chiroptera)*. Australian Journal of Zoology Volume 45, 1997.

2. Hood, W. et al (2001). *Interspecific and Intraspecific Variation in Proximate, Mineral, and Fatty Acid Composition of Milk in Old World Fruit Bats (Chiroptera: Pteropodidae). * Physiological and Biochemical Zoology 74(1):134 - 146.

In looking at the ideal milk replacer, we need a food that has the correct balance of proteins, carbohydrates and fats, together with a whole host of essential minerals and vitamins - and water. These components need to be in the right proportions according to these particular animals' needs and growth stage. Apart from nutritional breakdown, any diet also needs to be easily digested, absorbed, and readily utilised by the growing body.

Our chosen milk must:

- have sufficient protein to build cells and body mass;
- have sufficient fat and sugars to provide energy;
- be well-tolerated with regard to digestion;
- provide sufficient calcium to allow fast bone growth and lay down the correct bone density needed for the stresses of real flight post-release; and
- provide correct micro-nutrients such as magnesium and iron to power a myriad of growth processes such as calcium absorption, brain development and myelin nerve sheath development to name just three.

Calcium Deficiency:

Last season it was reported from wildlife groups that many pups had arrived in crèche with joint swellings (an indication of calcium deficiency) and that upon arrival none of these bats had achieved flight. Investigations took place and are reported on in the full article.

Calcium Deficiency in Baby / Juvenile Flying-foxes and Long Bone Curvature

We know from research that flying-fox pups reared by their mothers have a calcium intake in their natural milk of about 155mg/100mL. Regardless of which milk-replacer we use, it is vital that our hand-reared pups receive this

same calcium intake. Some commonly used formulae have staggeringly low rates - as low as 38mg/100mL.

Pups raised on such deficient formulas may look fine to carers' eyes, but what is going on inside? This is where x-rays showing bone density are valuable. We cannot measure long bone curvature by eyesight alone and an affected pup may appear normal until the point of creche/release, or worse - post release.

For bats (Blacks & Greys) with a daily forearm extension of around 0.87mm per day, it is vital we supply both adequate *soluble* Calcium and daily sunshine to allow vitamin D3 synthesis. When it all goes wrong, it can look like this below...

The radius of a flying-fox pup is one of the fastest growing bones of any animal in the world. At a daily extension rate of 0.87mm per day for blacks and greys, you can just about watch them growing before your eyes - and - spectacled babies' forearms may grow even faster. The photo below shows a sad example of what can happen when something goes wrong. This hand-reared pup had such a badly curved forearm that release became impossible. This condition of long bone curvature can be caused by one, or a combination of these factors:

- 1. Lack of dietary calcium (incorrect milk additives)
- 2. Insufficient D3 synthesis (lack of sunshine)
- 3. Underfeeding
- 4. Overfeeding
- 5. Genetic defect

The major problem with insufficient calcium and/or D3 synthesis is that with no initial and visible warning signs, babies may grow



Long Bone Curvature
Photo kindly provided by Dave Pinson

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looking perfect, but if they are calcium deficient, they can perish before maturity. Calcium and D3 deficient babies are prone to long bone curvature and spontaneous finger fractures at, or just after, the point of crèching and release. One final point, don't forget your flying-foxes must also have their dose of daily sunshine and regular offerings of water.

Conclusions:

Although it is up to the carer as to which milk to use as a supplement for pups in care, I am sure we are all striving to provide the best possible start for these animals. Information provided in this article is designed to give carers some "food for thought" when choosing a product this year. Bear in mind whatever you chose make sure you are providing enough calcium in some form or another and a good daily dose of fresh air and sunshine.

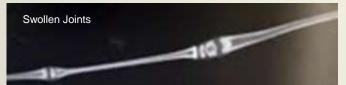
Should any carer require further information please do not hesitate to contact Sonja Elwood or Mandi Griffiths.



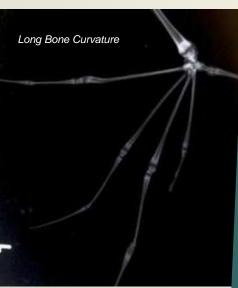
The full article is available from the members' section of Sydney Wildlife's website (www.sydneywildlife.org.au), log into the members only section and go to "online resources" from where you will be able to download a full copy. The full article will also give carers more information about other milk replacers.

Happy batting ⊚!



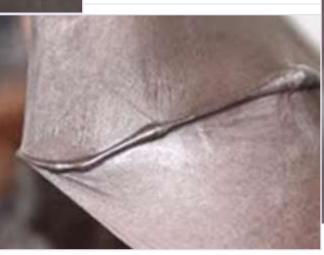






Bone Curvature and Swollen Joints
(X-rays kindly provided by Mandi Griffiths &
Canley Heights Vet Clinic)

Left & right: Swollen Joints
Below: Green Stick Fracture
Photos kindly provided by
Mandi Griffiths





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Garry Marsh acquainting MOPs with a BTL

Community Education

Community education is a vital part of the work that we do at Sydney Wildlife and takes many forms. From children at kindergarten to residents of retirement villages and all points in between, presentations are tailored to meet the needs of a wide range of interest groups. Lots of community education and outreach also takes place through information stalls at shopping centres, street fairs, local government events and all manner of venues.



Crisis: Are you answering the call?

A shortage of volunteer members for the Rescue Hotline has reached crisis point. Several times recently, we have had to consider closing the office because no-one has been available to staff the phones.

The Rescue Hotline is one of the key functions of our organisation. If phones are not answered, animals will not be rescued. Most members have busy lives and

competing demands – a scenario best dealt with by setting priorities. Are you prepared to make taking calls on the hotline a priority for you?

It often seems to be the same people who staff multiple shifts. We need more members to share the load by taking on regular weekly, fortnightly or monthly shifts. Members who can't schedule in a regular shift, can help by filling in from time-to-time when shift vacancies occur at short notice.

Are weekdays or weekends best for you? To get yourself on the weekday roster please contact Jenny Sistrom, for weekends please contact Linda Wilson.

People who've worked in the office and feel ready to fly solo overnights from home, please contact Carolyn Martin.

What it really was:

With the next edition of our newsletter we are starting a light hearted column called,

"What it really was" and are asking members to send in brief examples of rescues that turned out to be something entirely different to what was expected.

Hissing after dark

At 11pm one night last week, Kerry Ellis of our South West branch took a call from a member of the public who reported "a hissing snake" under their bed.

The caller was distressed and had left the room, closing the door behind her to keep the snake contained. Kerry asked whether there was someone else in the household or maybe a neighbour close by who could take a look under the bed to check the situation. However the caller lived alone and didn't have anyone

close at hand at that time of night to assist. Rather than call out another rescuer in the middle of the night Kerry set off herself for the 40 minute drive to the caller's home.

As soon as she opened the bedroom door, Kerry recognised the hiss, extricated a very frightened cat from under the bed and removed a clothes peg from its tail. With the peg removed, Snake Cat was happy to leave but neither Kerry or the caller is certain how the peg got on the cats tail!

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Member's Minute

In this edition we invite Nathan Devaney from the South West branch to tell us about himself.

"I joined Sydney Wildlife in 2008 but I've been interested in native wildlife for as long as I can remember. As a child I walked to school through the bush and would sometimes find injured or orphaned wildlife and take it home with me and care for it until it could be released. I have a passion for snakes and catching snakes was my main motivation for joining Sydney Wildlife but since becoming a member I have rescued all sorts of animals.

What I have really enjoyed is finding out about and rescuing animals that I didn't even know existed. Some examples are Feathertails, Antechinus and Pygmy Possums. I've lived in Heathcote all my life and didn't even know those species existed. I have learnt so much since becoming a member."

Note from the Editor: We are told by Nathan's colleagues in the South West branch that Nathan is such a busy rescuer and carer that he has been known to have every inch of his vehicle occupied by rescue baskets and cages!

Sydney Wildlife Member Resources—Dart Gun

Did you know that Sydney Wildlife has a dart gun which can be used to assist in catching animals that otherwise can't be reached?

The dart gun propels a dart which can be loaded with a tranquiliser or other medication. Sometimes animals such as macropods or even a large, feisty possum may be injured but impossible (or near impossible) to catch. In some circumstances the use of the dart gun may assist in avoiding cardiomyopathy which can result from macropods being put under the stress of being chased.

For those of you interested in the technical details, the gun is a, Pneu Dart 176B. It propels CO2 darts and has a range of up to 25 metres.

Neville Plumb of Sydney Wildlife's

south west branch has been trained in the use of the gun and is fully licensed. Licence applications are rigorous and are processed through the NSW Police Firearms registry.

The most common uses for the dart gun for Sydney Wildlife are likely to be administration of medication and the relocation of animals such as Macropods.

Neville is prepared to travel to whereever the need arises. Should you need Neville's assistance or wish to discuss any aspect of the dart gun with Neville, please don't hesitate to contact him – his contact details are on the list.

Keeping in touch

How long has it been since you've attended a branch meeting? Some members never miss whilst for other members getting to a branch meeting once in a blue moon is a treat.

Whether you are a regular or someone who can only ever get there occasionally, members are encouraged to attend their branch meetings and get to know people and networks in their the local area.

If you are not sure about dates and times of meetings contact someone such as the Secretary or Chair of your branch.

The latest list of branch exec and animal coordinators can be downloaded from the on-line resources page of the Members Only section of our website.

New Members

A warm welcome to all of the Rescue & Care Course graduates who have become members of Sydney Wildlife since the last newsletter. These include:

from Nov 2011 course

11011111012	orr ocured
Liam Abbey	NORTH SYDNEY
Andrea Carmody	NTH PARRAMATTA
Goretti Chao	LUGARNO
Kristy Coates	GYMEA
Patricia Couch	RYDE
Briana Dibble	FRENCHS FOREST
Alexandra Dimitriadis	EARLWOOD
Laura Fazl	RABY
Stefania Fumagalli	BONDI BEACH
Rachel Granter	BEVERLY HILLS
Lynleigh Greig	FRENCHS FOREST
Zoe Harrison	NORTH SYDNEY
Bill Haskin	ENMORE
Tom Holloway	RYDE
Clare Jones	MANLY
Samantha Kelly	KINGS LANGLEY
James & Pat Laird	KILLARA
Maryanne Large	WEST PYMBLE
Duncan Mathers	LANE COVE
Justine Norwood	ROSEVILLE
Natasha Olsson	GORDON
Robbie Owad	WINSTON HILLS
Geoff & Sharman Peach	OYSTER BAY
Emma Richardson	KILLARA
Polly Rickard	ENMORE
Angela Russell	MT ANNAN
Ganna Sikalo	TOONGABBIE
Kathy Staggs	BEROWRA
Laura Stevenson	GLEN ALPINE
Cindy Talbot	SEVEN HILLS
Ozlem Topses	NORTH EPPING
Trevor Turner	CHIPPING NORTON
Petra & Doug Williams	MIRANDA
Warren & Jeanna Wilson	GORDON
Lorraine Woodward	INGLESIDE

from Feb 2012 course

Liam Bennett	LILLI PILLI	
Shannon Blackmore	LANE COVE	
Christopher Catterall	WAHROONGA	
Dorothy & Riaan Cilliers	CAMMERAY	
Emma Cooke	BELROSE	
Maria Cornejo	CHATSWOOD	
Anthony Coward	LANE COVE	
Liz Daley	PADDINGTON	
Helena Dalton	NORTH ROCKS	
Deborah Fleet	BEECROFT	
Roxane Francis	SOUTH COOGEE	
Kelly & Maree Gilkes	KINGS PARK	
Susan Griffin	KILLARNEY HEIGHTS	
Alison MacLachlan	MOSMAN	
Mary-Jane Partridge	MONA VALE	
Mark Warr	KILLARNEY HEIGHTS	

Getting Connected

The Board is pleased to announce that the Wildlife Office now has an Internet facility available for members to use while working there. This will enable volunteers with smart phones, laptops and similar devices with wireless support to connect to the Internet. The next step will be connecting the office computers.

We hope working in the office will be easier for some. Internet searches, connecting to your personal e-mail and surfing the Net will be possible. The

intention is to keep Internet access as unrestricted as possible although activity may be restricted if the need arises. Please take care and be responsible when using the Internet.

To connect, all you will need is the wireless password, which will be made available to office volunteers. For security reasons, the password will change from time-to-time.

We do not have our rescuer details, or animal record forms on-line yet, so there are no changes to the way we work in the office. There is no need to use the Internet or a computer if you do not wish to do so.

The Heron by Peg Parish



A Heron strolled along my way
We nodded heads and said "g'day"
But goodness me, he's back today
And looks as if he means to stay.

I spoke in my best Heron-speak And told him of the nearby creek But he just shook his pointy beak And gave the lawn another tweak.

I wondered at his interest
Does he intend to build a nest
In the branches of my tree
Where he could dwell in privacy?

A splendid neighbour he would be I hope he thinks the same of me.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS...

A warm thank-you to all nominees for your willingness to put yourself forward for Board membership and thank-you to everyone who voted. Active participation contributes to the

for articles to include in newsletter: May 15

success of the process. After a false start elections to the Board of Directors were finalised at the end of last year.

The new board follows below:

Secretary Helen Kennedy Treasurer Lindsay Bridgland Statistics & Office Coordinator Stuart Ferguson PR & Media Wendy Williamson Inner West Representative Jann Jeffries McLean Ryan North West Representative Kelly Ellis South West Representative North Central Representative Mary Laws North East Representative Carolyn Martin

At the first meeting of the new board, Jann Jefferies was elected Chair and Mary Laws was elected as Public Officer.

Scheduled Training Courses 2012

	Dates	Course	Location
	March 11	Possum Course	Northbridge
	April 21—22	Vet Students	Northbridge
	May 5 - 6	Rescue and Care Course	Northbridge
	July 28	Raptor Rescue	Northbridge
	Aug 4-5	Rescue and Care Course	Northbridge
	Sept 8	Possum Course	Northbridge
	Sept 15	Flying Fox/ Bat Course	Northbridge
	Oct14	Baby Bird Course	TBA
	Nov 3-4	Rescue and Care Course	Northbridge

Further information available from course coordinator below

Basic Training	Jodi Lewis jodilewis236@bigpond.com	0407 813 149
Flying Fox	Helen Kennedy helen.kennedy@msn.com	0414 319 737
Macropod	Garry Marsh garrymarsh@ozemail.com.au	9456 2102 0404 214 030
Possum	Bev Young ianbevyoung @bigpond.com	9418 9063
Reptile	Helen Kennedy helen.kennedy@msn.com	0414 319 737

Sydney Wildlife

Wildlife matters

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